

Appendix 1E California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)

Plate colors may vary slightly due to age and exposure. Plate sizes may also vary in length or width by 1/8 of an inch. The following charts contain information for plates issued from 1914 through 1972.

Automobile Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1914	Brick Red	White	No tab or sticker issued.	1914 through 1915 plates were 16” by 5 1/2”.
1915	Yellow	Black		
1916	White	Blue	Symbols were issued to affix to the license plates as evidence of registration. In 1916, the symbol was the figure of a Bear; in 1917, a Poppy; in 1918, a Liberty Bell; and in 1919, a Star.	1916 through 1919 plates were 13” by 4 1/2”.
1917				
1918				
1919				
1920	Black	White	No tab or sticker issued.	1920 through 1928 plates were 13 7/8” by 4 7/8”.
1921	Yellow	Black		
1922	White	Blue		
1923	Black	White		
1924	Green	White		
1925	Yellow	Black		
1926	Blue	White		
1927	Maroon	White		
1928	Blue	Yellow		
1929	Black	Orange	No tab or sticker issued.	1929 through 1939 plates were 14” by 6 1/8”.
1930	Orange	Black		
1931	Black	Orange		
1932	Orange	Black		
1933	Black	Orange		
1934	Orange	Black		
1935	Black	Orange		
1936	Orange	Black		
1937	Black	Orange		
1938	Lemon Yellow	Black		
1939	Blue	Yellow	Contained words “California World’s Fair”.	

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Automobile Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1940	Mustard Yellow	Black	No tab or sticker issued.	1940 through 1951 plates were 13 7/8" by 6 1/8" with rounded corners.
1941	Black	Yellow		
1942	Black	Yellow	Plates had a painted yellow stripe across the top of the plate with indented black characters. The stripe had the number "19" on the left, CALIFORNIA in the middle, and the number "42" on the right. OR A long steel strip was issued to use with the 1941 plates. The strip was painted yellow with raised black characters with the number "19" on the left, "CALIFORNIA" in the middle, and the number "42" on the right.	
1943			Metal lithographed tab, white background with red letter "V" for use on upper right corner of 1941 and 1942 plates. ("V" for Victory).	
1944			A paper sticker to attach to the inside of the windshield was issued for use with 1941 or 1942 plates. The sticker was 3" by 2 1/2", contained blue and white scrollwork, "1944" split by a golden yellow Great Seal of California, below the seal were red numbers, and below the numbers were the words "Department of Motor Vehicles" in blue and white.	

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Appendix 1E California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)

Automobile Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1945	Black	White	One plate only. No tab or sticker issued.	1940 through 1951 plates were 13 7/8" by 6 1/8" with rounded corners.
1946			Metal lithographed tab, chrome yellow background with black number "46" for use with the 1945 plate.	
1947	Yellow	Black	No tab or sticker issued.	
1948			Aluminum tab, natural background with the red number "48" for use on upper right-hand corner of 1947 plates.	
1949			Aluminum tab, natural background with black number "49" for use on upper right-hand corner of 1947 plates.	
1950			Aluminum tab, natural background with red number "50" for use on upper right-hand corner of 1947 plates.	
1951	Black	Yellow	No tab or sticker issued.	
1952			Steel tab, chrome yellow background with black number "52" for use on lower right-hand corner of rear 1951 plate.	
1953			Steel tab, white background with black numerals "53" for use on lower right-hand corner of rear 1951 plate.	
1954	Black	Yellow	Steel tab, one only, red background with white number "54" for use on lower right-hand corner of rear 1951 plate.	
1955			Steel tab, one only, pearl grey background with black number "55" for use on lower right-hand corner of rear 1951 plate.	

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Automobile Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>		<i>Plate Size</i>
1956	Yellow	Black	No sticker issued.		1956 plates were 12” by 6”.
1957			<i>Sticker Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Placement of Sticker on Plate</i>
			Red	Black	1957 through 1962 year stickers will be placed on a 1956 plate to the right of the embossed lettering of California.
			Green	White	
			White	Black	
			Blue-Grey	Silver	
			Red	Silver	
			White	Green	
1963	Black	Yellow	No sticker issued.		
1964			<i>Sticker Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Placement of Sticker on Plate</i>
			White	Black	1963 through 1972 plates were 12” by 6”. 1964 through 1969 year stickers will be placed on the right well of base plate.
			Orange	Black	
			Yellow	Black	
			Blue	Black	
			Pink	Black	
			White	Black	

Appendix 1E California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)

Commercial Plate Information— For commercial plates use the automobile plate chart with the information below to verify plates issued during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1970s.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Symbols</i>	<i>Comments</i>			
<i>During the 1930s and 1940s commercial vehicles used the following symbols:</i>					
1930 through 1949	BE SC 7890	Solid tires on a commercial vehicle operating on a Board of Equalization (BOE) Permit.			
	BE PC 5432	Pneumatic tires on commercial vehicle operating on a BOE Permit.			
	P C 78901	Commercial vehicle with pneumatic tires.			
	S C 23456	Commercial vehicle with solid tires.			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Sticker Color</i>	<i>Sticker Character Color</i>	<i>Placement of Sticker on Plate</i>
1970	Black or Blue	Yellow	Orange	Black	Plates will be either black or blue with six yellow characters. 1970 through 1972 year stickers will be placed on the right well of plate.
1971			Green	Black	
1972			Yellow	Black	

Appendix 1E California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)

Motorcycle Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1914	Red	White	Stacked one letter with two or three numbers. No tab or sticker issued.	1914 through 1915 plates were 9 1/2” by 2 3/4” fender shaped.
1915	Yellow	Black		
1916	White	Blue	California issued symbols affixed to the license plates as evidence of registration. In 1916, the symbol was the figure of a Bear; in 1917, a Poppy; in 1918, a Liberty Bell; and in 1919, a Star.	1916 through 1919 plates were 9 1/2” by 2 3/4” fender shaped.
1917				
1918				
1919				
1920	Black	White	No tab or sticker issued.	1920 through 1934 plates were 4” by 7 1/2” with three or four numbers.
1921	Yellow	Black		
1922	White	Blue		
1923	Black	White		
1924	Green	White		
1925	Yellow	Black		
1926	Blue	White		
1927	Maroon/Red	White		
1928	Blue	Yellow		
1929	Black	Yellow		
1930	Yellow/Orange	Black		
1931	Black	Yellow		
1932	Yellow	Black		
1933	Black	Yellow/ Orange		
1934	Yellow	Black		
1935	Black	Yellow		1935 through 1940 plates were 4 1/8” by 7 1/4” with rounded corners and four or five numbers.
1936	Orange	Black		
1937	Black	Yellow		
1938	Lemon Yellow	Black		
1939				
1940	Mustard Yellow	Black		

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Appendix 1E California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)

Motorcycle Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>		<i>Plate Size</i>
1941	Black	Yellow			1941 through 1946 plates were 4 1/8” by 7 1/4” with rounded corners and five numbers.
1942	Yellow	Black			
1943					
1944					
1945	Yellow	Black			
1946					
1947	Yellow	Black	No tab or sticker issued.		
1948			Metal tabs.		
1949					
1950					
1951	Black	Yellow	No tab or sticker issued.		
1952			Metal tabs.		
1953					
1954					
1955					
			<i>Sticker Color</i>	<i>Sticker Character Color</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1956	Yellow	Black	No sticker issued.		1956 through 1962 plates were 8” by 5” with six numbers.
1957			Red	Black	
1958			Green	White	
1959			White	Black	
1960			Blue/Gray	Silver	
1961			Red	Silver	
1962			White	Green	
1963	Black	Yellow	No tab or sticker issued.		
1964			Black	White	
1965			Black	Orange	
1966			Black	Yellow	
1967			Black	Blue	
1968			Black	Pink	
1969			Black	White	

Appendix 1E California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)

Trailer Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1914	Brick Red	White	Porcelain.	
1915	Yellow	Black		
1916				
1917				
1918				
1919				
1920	Black	White	No tab or sticker issued	1920 through 1928 plates were 13 7/8" by 4 7/8".
1921	Yellow	Black		
1922	White	Blue		
1923	Black	White		
1924	Green	White	Stacked "TRL" "CAL 24"	
1925	Yellow	Black	Stacked "TRL" "CAL 25"	
1926	Blue	White	Stacked "TRL" "CAL 26"	
1927	Maroon/Red	White	Stacked "TRL" "CAL 27"	
1928	Blue	Yellow	Stacked "TRL" "California 28"	
1929	Black	Yellow	Stacked "TRL" "CAL 29"	
1930	Yellow/Orange	Black	Stacked "TRL" "PT" followed by five numbers.	
1931	Black	Yellow		
1932	Yellow	Black		
1933	Black	Yellow/Orange		
1934	Yellow	Black		
1935	Black	Yellow	Stacked "PT" followed by five or six numbers.	
1936	Orange	Black		
1937	Black	Yellow	Stacked "TRL" or "PT" followed by five or six numbers.	
1938	Lemon Yellow	Black		
1939				
1940	Mustard Yellow	Black		
1941	Black	Yellow	Stacked "TRL" or "PT" followed by six numbers.	

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Appendix 1E **California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)**
Trailer Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1942	Black	Yellow	A long steel strip was issued to use with the 1941 plates; the strip was painted yellow with raised black characters. The steel strip for the top of the plate had the number 19 on the left, “CALIFORNIA” in the middle, and the number “42” on the right.	
1943			Metal lithographed tab, white background with red letter “V” for use on upper right corner of 1941 and 1942 plates. (“V” for Victory).	
1944			A paper sticker to attach to the inside of the windshield was issued for use with 1941 or 1942 plates. The sticker was 3” by 2 1/2”, contained blue and white scrollwork, the number 1944 split by a golden yellow Great Seal of California, below the seal were red numbers, and below the numbers were the words Department of Motor Vehicles in blue and white.	
1945	Black	White	No tab or sticker issued.	
1946			Metal lithographed tab, chrome yellow background with black number “46” for use with the 1945 plate.	
1947	Yellow	Black	No tab or sticker issued.	
1948			Aluminum tab, natural background with the red number “48” for use on upper right-hand corner of plates.	
1949			Aluminum tab, natural background with black number “49” for use on upper right-hand corner of plates.	

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Trailer Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>		<i>Plate Size</i>
1950	Yellow	Black	Aluminum tab, natural background with red number “50” for use on upper right-hand corner of plates.		
1951	Black	Yellow	No tab or sticker issued.		
1952			Steel tab, chrome yellow background with black number “52” for use on lower right-hand corner of plates.		
1953			Steel tab, white background with black number “53” for use on lower right-hand corner of plates.		
1954			One steel tab, red background with white number “54” for use on lower right-hand corner of rear plate.		
1955			One steel tab, pearl grey background with black number “55” for use on lower right-hand corner of rear plate.		
			<i>Sticker Color</i>	<i>Sticker Character Color</i>	<i>Plate Size</i>
1956	Yellow	Black	No sticker issued.		1956 through 1962 plates were 8” by 5” with six numbers.
1957			Red	Black	
1958			Green	White	
1959			White	Black	
1960			Blue-Grey	Silver	
1961			Red	Silver	
1962			White	Green	

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Trailer Plate Information—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Plate Color</i>	<i>Character Color</i>	<i>Comments</i>		<i>Plate Size</i>
1963	Black	Yellow	No sticker issued.		
1964			Black	White	
1965			Black	Orange	
1966			Black	Yellow	
1967			Black	Blue	
1968			Black	Pink	
1969			Black	White	

Appendix 1E ***California License Plate Data (1914 – 1972)***